

reduced to zero by the year 2050. The Federal Government is the largest energy consumer in the world and is currently responsible for emitting 100 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually. Meeting this goal of zero net emissions will be a significant step in the direction of minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and correspondingly reducing our impact on climate change.

Moreover, I concur with Chairman WAXMAN and others that setting and meeting these ambitious standards will accelerate the pace of development and adoption of technologies that will be critical to addressing climate change in the U.S. and worldwide.

That being said, we still have some reservations about the specific provisions in the bill.

There is a provision in title VI of the bill with the seemingly nebulous title of "judicial review," more popularly referred to as the "citizen enforcement provision." This provision would allow individuals to sue Federal agencies for failing to comply with carbon reduction goals called for in the legislation. To make matters worse, the provision allows plaintiffs to collect potentially millions of dollars in damages and attorneys' fees regardless of whether they can demonstrate any actual harm to themselves.

I appreciate the gentleman from California's working with us on this language and putting appropriate caps, and that makes the legislation amenable to myself. We have other Members who still have concerns.

Another concern I have in this legislation sets the government up to fail.

I mentioned earlier that title VI contains many laudable goals with respect to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by the Federal Government. But while eliminating all greenhouse gas emissions by the Federal Government in a few decades sounds great, in reality, this goal is going to be very difficult to achieve.

As this bill moves forward, I trust we will be able to move away from the rhetoric. We need to identify realistic goals that our Federal Government can meet and achieve and look for ways that we can achieve it.

Which raises a final concern: If you set unrealistic goals and then arm potential plaintiffs nationwide with the power to sue the government for failing to meet these goals, agencies will have little choice but to divert scarce resources away from their critical agency missions in order to ensure adequate funding to support the carbon emissions requirement.

While the majority included a provision at our request stating that agency plans on reducing greenhouse gas emissions must be "consistent with the agency's primary mission," I am concerned that we need some work to ensure that agencies continue to place primary importance on their underlying responsibilities to serve the American people.

As great a threat as global warming is, the Federal Government also needs

to carefully balance taxpayer dollars on reducing emissions at the expense of shortchanging other priorities such as health care, education, and national defense.

Mr. Chairman, I have limited my remarks to discuss only title VI of this legislation, the Carbon Neutral Government Act, and I again want to congratulate Chairman WAXMAN for working with us on this provision. I believe this legislation could go far in terms of striking the balance between making the Federal Government "greener" and devoting limited resources toward providing needed resources to the American public. But as we work our way through the legislative process, we want to continue to be engaged and address some of the concerns that we have identified.

I do have more serious concerns about other provisions in the broader energy bill put forward by the majority and, unfortunately, therefore, regret that I may not be able to support the energy bill before us today, depending on the outcome of some of the amendments.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I wish to yield 1 minute to my colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS).

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to rise in strong support of H.R. 3221, title I, the Green Jobs Act.

I am here to tell you that we have a shortage of technically skilled, trained workers to get into these high-tech jobs and green-collar jobs. We think that all Americans should be able to participate.

This bill will allow for 3 million workers here to be able to enjoy this kind of training and advancement. We would open up the doors in our communities of color, those that are disadvantaged. We would allow for community colleges, vocational education, and labor-intensive apprenticeship programs to be a vehicle to help enhance this workforce that is so direly needed in our country.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to Mr. ISSA, the ranking member on the Energy Subcommittee.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Chairman, I am shocked. I'm shocked that this bill and this process is going forward.

When we marked this bill up in the Committee on Government Reform, I was positive that it could not possibly go forward without the section on citizen enforcement being amended, reformed, or eliminated. And yet I am here today not only finding out that it is still in the bill but of the Rules Committee having had the audacity to not even allow it to be considered for amendment.

Mr. Chairman, this piece of legislation is a license for an unlimited

amount of suits against the government by the extreme environmental groups. In fact, this bill pays a \$75,000 bounty on top of unlimited legal fees to anyone who sues the government even if, in fact, that suit is based on this body's failure to act. Yes. Lawyers will be telling us, by suing us, that we must do more, and there will be no controls. They can sue in all 92 locations around the country. They can sue for any reason. We will have to pay the bill. When they lose, too bad. When they win, they get paid for taking from us not only 100 percent of their legal fees but \$75,000 on top of that.

This is a license for America to be held hostage by the trial lawyers. It was deliberate. It was slipped through the committee. They said it was going to be fixed. In fact, nothing has been fixed; and we have been prevented from having an amendment on the House floor. This is undemocratic, and the Democrats know it.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This provision was a topic for discussion in our committee, and we did try to accommodate some of the current concerns expressed to us. I just want to point that out to my colleague from California.

This is obviously a dynamic process, the legislative process. As we move forward, certainly we are open to further discussion. But I think your case was a bit overstated, and I think that we attempted to meet some of your concerns. If we haven't fully done that, we will continue to discuss it.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WAXMAN. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, our concern is that Mr. ISSA would have liked to have put this to the floor and at least have given the floor an opportunity to have addressed these issues for the whole House. We very much appreciate the chairman's concern.

Mr. WAXMAN. I can appreciate that. And the Rules Committee has to decide what amendments to make in order or not, and I can see why the gentleman feels aggrieved that he didn't have a chance to offer a further amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Virginia has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from San Diego (Mr. BILBRAY).

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Chairman, in San Diego County today, the consumers are paying over \$3.50 for gasoline, and people point fingers at the oil companies when, in fact, Washington, DC, has mandated that we put in our gasoline corn-based ethanol that costs \$4 a gallon. And considering that you need 1½